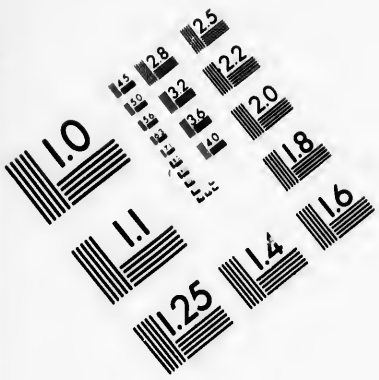

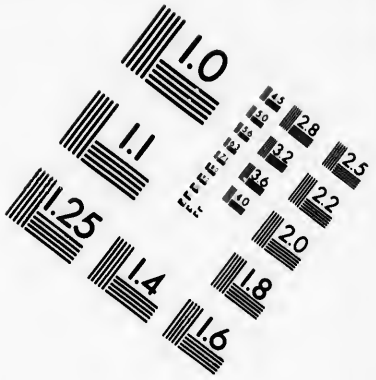

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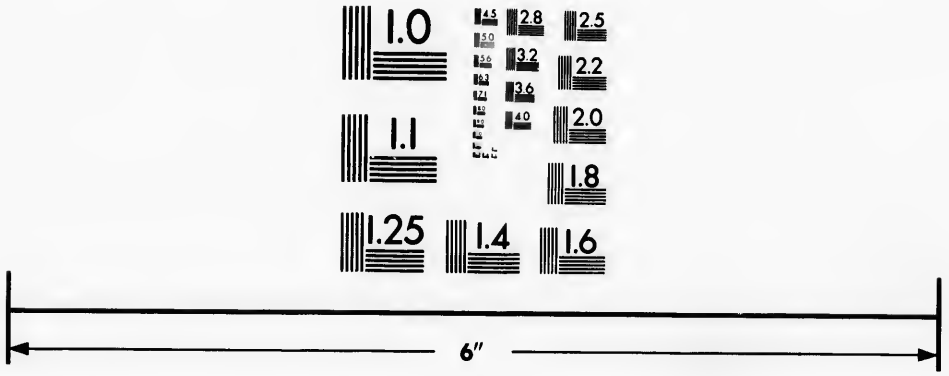

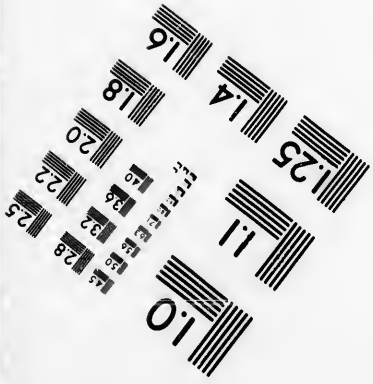

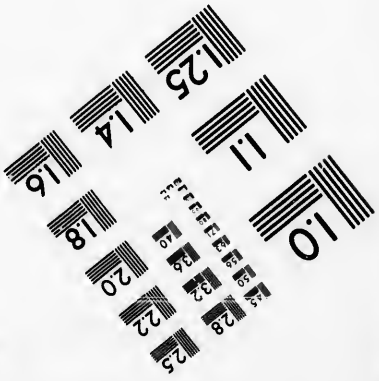

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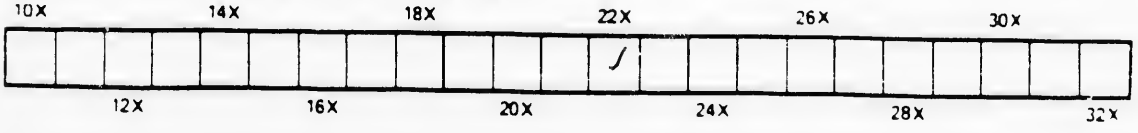

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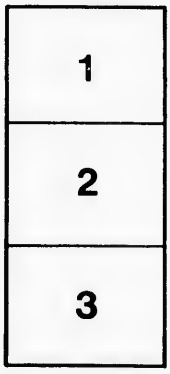

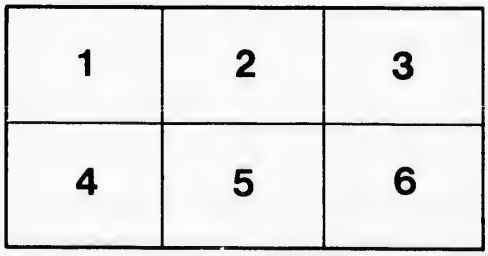

"ONE LORD. ONE FAITH. ONE BAPTISM."

The Truth in Love.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

MR. J. HEIGHINGTON,

AT COLLEGE STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, TORONTO, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS BAPTISM BY THE PASTOR, REV. S. A. DYKE.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

TORONTO:
CHRISTIAN HELPER PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO.
1880.

PREFACE.

The following address appeared (substantially) in the *Canadian Baptist* of June 6th, 1878. Many brethren have expressed to me the pleasure afforded by its perusal, and the desirableness of its being issued in pamphlet form for distribution. It is in response to this that I have consented to publish it in such a form, together with the brief compendium prepared by my relative, Mr. Compston, during his ministry at Whitevale, Ont. That it may be rendered useful in its mission is my strong desire and earnest prayer.

J. HEIGHINGTON.

94 Bay Street,

Toronto, *February 17th*, 1880.

Special terms to Pastors and others for quantities.

Address.

It has been thought desirable by the brethren here that I should publicly state my reasons for leaving another body of Christians, and for seeking fellowship with the College Street Baptist Church. Willingly do I accede to this. I believe that, like myself, there are many who from a careful study of God's word have been compelled to acknowledge the grievous error of "INFANT SPRINKLING," to regard immersion as the only Scriptural mode of Baptism, and believers the only subjects. Such feel it their duty to be baptized after the same manner as our Lord, but for reasons best known to themselves, hesitate to openly declare their convictions. I have therefore consented all the more readily to state my reasons for requesting Baptism at the hands of your pastor, in the hope that my example as well as my words may lead them to a like happy decision.

Many of you are aware that hitherto I have been connected with the people called Methodists. I have nothing unkind to say of that body of Christians. It is the church of my fathers, and by the preaching of the Gospel from one of its pulpits I was brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. I have therefore abundant cause to look upon it with respect and sincere regard. I have met with much sterling piety within its pale, with its members I have taken 'sweet counsel,' with its ministers I have laboured, and I do not hesitate to say that among them are to be found many of the "excellent of the earth." It is my opinion that from Methodism even Baptists may learn important lessons in Christian usefulness.

During the ten years I have worked with them as a local preacher I have had many happy seasons and I am hoping that when I meet my friends on the "golden shore," there will be amongst that vast multitude some who will greet me joyously and who will be my crown of rejoicing throughout eternity. Nevertheless, during my association with Methodism I could not be blind to the hurtful tendency of many of its prominent doctrines and

practices, and be sure I do not speak from a superficial knowledge but from a close and intimate acquaintance with its workings for many years. Though I have previously spoken of the many excellent men to be found amongst its adherents, it by no means follows that this is the rule or that this is the outcome of its teachings. They have simply lived better than their creeds—that is all. As my time is limited I can but glance at some of the doctrines and practices of Methodism which to my mind appear to be unscriptural, and which have led me to seek amongst Baptists "a more excellent way." Need I remind you that they constantly practice the sprinkling of "unconscious babes" upon the mere profession of faith by their parents or sponsors. Instances have not been wanting, where, as neither of the parents have been present a servant *has been delegated* to bear the responsibility. This they call baptism, and in this way many are allowed to creep into the Church of God who are utter strangers to religion; worldly minded people, who destroy the vitality of any church. The young are taught that by this so-called baptism they were admitted into Christ's visible Church in infancy, and that when they come to years of discretion, the church can claim them as being virtually its property. On the mere profession of a desire "to flee from the wrath to come" they are admitted into its fellowship, to all its privileges, and are invited and encouraged to partake of the Lord's Supper. How utterly is all this at variance with God's Word; yet it is useless to deny the truth of these allegations. If the Bible teaches one thing more definitely than another, it is, that a church is constituted of baptized believers only. This naturally opens out the question of the *mode* of baptism. They contend that sprinkling is the proper and Scriptural mode, but we say, point only to *one place* in Scripture where an adult believer was sprinkled. Shew us what is still more difficult where an infant was sprinkled, and we will abandon our case. If as some say, the Bible abounds with proofs of infant sprinkling, if that is the Scriptural mode of baptising, surely one instance may be found. We do not ask much, but we ask in vain and why? *Because it is not there.* Much as Pedo-Baptist expounders have wrested the words of the Bible, they have failed to supply us with

a single case of baptism by sprinkling, much less a case of infant sprinkling, and for the reason that it is impossible. There is not one passage within the covers of that Book that teaches infant sprinkling. We will go farther still and say fearlessly, there is not a single sentence from which any such inference may logically and legitimately be drawn. So much has this been felt by learned and able commentators, that they have abandoned that ground entirely, and now attempt to defend it on the principles of convenience and expediency. Well might Henry Ward Beecher say, "whoever attempts to support infant sprinkling from Scripture testimony builds on a foundation of sand." On the other hand if you point to any instance of baptism in the sacred record in which the mode is referred to, we will prove beyond doubt, that it was by immersion, and invariably preceded by repentance and faith in the subjects of it. Not only that, but the Greek word used to describe the act is one that will not admit of any other rendering than that of total submersion in the water, exactly as you will see it administered here to-night. Take our Lord's example. In relating this the inspired writer tells us "And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." Take also that of the Eunuch. "And they *went down* both *into* the water, *both Philip and the Eunuch*, and he baptized him. *And when they were come up out of the water*, ..." Now tell us for what purpose they went down into the water and came up out of the water if not to be immersed. If it had been intended that we should sprinkle *they* would have sprinkled, and the divine record would have taught it. Scripture, however, knows no other mode of baptism than immersion, and the performance enacted over an unconscious babe is no baptism at all. This may sound harshly on the ears of some, but it is none the less true. I remember being rudely shocked to find that the act I had been fondly trusting in as an ordinance of heaven was nothing more than a commandment of man. So much has the force of this evidence been felt that it is now almost universally acknowledged that immersion was the mode in which Christ by his disciples administered baptism, that it was the only way known to the Apostolic churches, that it was for centuries the unvarying practice of the early

Christian Church, that even from Methodist pulpits I have heard it announced that if any of those "on trial" desired baptism they were prepared to administer it in either way as the candidate might elect, as though the ordinance of heaven could be varied to suit the convenience or caprice of men! I thought when I had gone thus far I had gone a long way, but as I pursued my search the light gradually dawned and I found that baptism by immersion "Into the name of the FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST," was the only mode of admission into the fellowship of the saints and to a seat at the Lord's Table. To my mind the fact was clear that a Christian Church should consist of none other than a company of believers. I found that my Saviour required of me obedience to "All" His commandments, not merely those to the disobedience of which a penalty is attached, but EVERY ONE of them. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I saw that my Master required the obedience, not of fear, but of love. O solemn, blessed truth! Never shall I forget the day when it beamed in upon my soul and my mind was fixed. I determined to follow His example, to submit to His command and be baptized. How well I remember the sorrow I felt at having spoken slightingly of His ordinance in years gone by when I grieved the heart of some of God's children by making light of it as many Pedo-Baptists do now. But they err now as I did then through ignorance, "not knowing the Scriptures." There is not another act of Christian duty so much held up to ridicule even by those who profess to have "put on the Lord Jesus." If there is one person here to-night who feels tempted to speak sneeringly of this ordinance, I ask you not to do it. It not only wounds others but harms you, and what is more, grieves Him who will bring into judgment every idle word you speak. My first thought on coming to this decision was to ask a minister of my own denomination to baptize me, but as he himself had not been baptized that was out of the question. The next thought was, can I not do it quietly? Say at some week evening service; but the truth came powerfully and reprovingly to my mind, that my confession must be "before many witnesses." Therefore am I here to-night. In passing let me correct an idea very prevalent with those who differ from us, that

we attach to this ordinance a saving efficacy. This is far from the truth. It is administered to me, not to *save* me, *but because I am saved.* I bless God that I do believe, I feel that

"My Saviour's obedience and blood,
Hide all my transgressions from view."

Again, there are multitudes who, while confessing that immersion is the only Scriptural mode of baptism, refuse to be baptized. They say "if baptism is not a saving ordinance, if I can be saved without it, what need for me to submit to it?" I hope there is no one present who will make use of such an unchristian argument. I must own to a genuine contempt for such reasoning from those who claim to be followers of the Lord Jesus. If we believe we shall be saved, that is certain, but we must not rest there. We must be prepared to do WHATSOEVER He has commanded us if we wish to be called His disciples. Our Saviour did not need saving, yet He was baptized at His own request. Are you better than your Saviour? If you say baptism by immersion is not essential, you charge Him with doing a work of supererogation and appointing an ordinance which is unnecessary and inconvenient. Thus you are caught in your own argument. If you desire to please Him, there is no other course for you but to be baptized, and for the same reason which He assigned when asked why He submitted to it—"Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." As my time is nearly gone I can but just name the other points of difference which I have previously referred to. There is the indiscriminate manner in which the mercy of God is preached, without due regard to His justice and sovereignty and the divine purpose in calling His own children. A specious kind of theology has crept into our churches and hymns and we are led to sing—often thoughtlessly—

"While the lamp (of life) holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return."

I am not so certain about this. It is good poetry, but defective theology and the sinner—ever ready to catch like a drowning man at straws—clings to this, and presuming upon such a cheap kind of salvation is led on to delusion and destruction. There is also a doctrine which teaches that a soul having once exercised saving faith in

"Jesus blood and righteousness," and "chosen that good part which shall not be taken away," may be irretrievably lost. It is thus taught in the following melancholy lines—

"Ah, Lord, with trembling we confess
A gracious soul may fall from grace."

This is a doctrine not only dishonouring to God, and to His Son in redeeming us, but altogether unwarranted by Scripture. It keeps the soul in continual fear and doubt, and robs it entirely of confidence and peace which ought to fill the heart of every believer, who is assured on the authority of God's word, that there is love and power enough in the Cross of Christ to preserve him from falling, and that the blood-bought souls of His children are too precious to Him to allow Satan thus to triumph. We are His, the purchase of His dying love, and no power can pluck us out of His almighty hand.

This doctrine of falling from grace gave me more pain than any other. When I heard people say they had been serving God for many years, yet could not trust Him; were always in doubt whether they would be in grace or out of grace by the next meeting night, I thought this is no religion for me. I looked into the matter and found that such fears were utterly groundless. I found that although my faith might waver or my confidence be shaken, God's divine purpose towards me could *never* change, and "He would carry me through." Since then I have had joy in religion, and I am perfectly satisfied that no storm can ever shatter the Rock in which I hide. Let me refer to one so-called means of grace, viz., the "class meeting." The tendency of this is infallibly to foster pride, to lead men to trust too much to their feelings, and to look inward upon themselves, instead of outward and upward to Christ, leading them to forget that they

"Dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But only lean on Jesus' name."

I wish to tread softly here. I have no desire to grieve, but the fact that there exists such a widespread repugnance against the class meeting, particularly amongst educated and sensitive minds, is sufficient to warrant these observations. There are thousands (I have spoken with hundreds) who hail with delight any opportunity that will

provide them with a legitimate excuse for not attending the class meeting. If this were a healthy means of grace there would not be this repugnance.

I might refer to the multiplicity of officers in that body, to its unwieldy organization, its system of government, the want of Scriptural knowledge on the part of its members, the worship given to its ministers and the tendency to take what they say for granted, without that private study of the Word which I am sure the ministers regret as much as we do. I might refer to the undue prominence given to what is plausibly termed "Evangelical Truth," to the chimerical doctrine of sinless perfection (commonly called Christian perfection), to the neglect of that proper spiritual teaching appertaining to daily life and conduct (particularly in business transactions), which has always characterized their pulpit ministrations, and as a consequence spiritual feebleness is begotten, and though they may boast of numbers and wealth their spiritual power in the world is undoubtedly small. To conclude, I do not expect to meet with a perfect church here, but as far as reason and revelation can guide me I mean to go. Henceforth I say to this church, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I cannot let this opportunity pass without speaking of the joy I have experienced since I came to this decision. I have looked forward to the event of to-night with feelings of devout satisfaction. In anticipating this act of duty my mind has been filled with a peace and joy never before experienced, and now my heart exults as already in spirit I follow my Master through the solemn waters of Baptism. Let me say to those who are hesitating as to this important matter, *decide now.*

Why should not this joy be yours? That which now seems to be a cross, will in the stooping to lift it be transformed into a crown of rejoicing by the approving smile of your Heavenly Father, and the assurance of His presence. Devoutly and earnestly I hope that the language of that noble servant of God, the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, may be your own—

> "We gave ourselves to Thee, O Lord,
> Content to be despised
> When we, obedient to Thy word,
> Believed, and were baptized."

A Compendium of Truths Relating to Baptism.

BY MILTON J. COMPSTON, OF BRISTOL COLLEGE, ENGLAND.

"*Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.*"—1 Pet. iii: 15.

I. THE WARRANT.

The Word of God is our only rule of faith. It informs us that Jesus Christ was baptized (Matt. 3: 13-17) and commanded his disciples to practice the rite. (Matt. 28: 19-20.)

II. THE MODE.

In every reference of the New Testament to this ordinance, the word employed is baptizo (Greek), which signifies to *dip*, *plunge*, or *immerse*. Only by such a mode is the meaning of the rite made to appear.

III. ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

Jesus Christ instituted two ordinances, viz., Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both these are symbolic. *Baptism* sets forth the washing away of sins, and death to our old nature; our rising again to "newness of life," and the putting on of Christ.

"*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death.*"—Rom. 6: 4.

IV. THE SUBJECTS.

Only such as could confess their faith were baptized by the Apostles. They had *first to teach* and the people *first to repent*.

If the rite had been administered to unconscious children, its import could have been nothing short of regeneration. There is, however, no instance in the Scriptures of the baptism of infants, and without a direct warrant we dare not practice it.

V. OUR POSITION.

Having searched the Scriptures that we may know our duty in this matter, we apprehend that there is but one course open to us.

Christ has commanded and we obey.

We dare not question His commands or falter in our obedience to them. He has inspired in us such a love for His name and person that we do not even *wish* to disobey. It is an indication of intense love and loyalty that Christians only wish to be and do that which is *essential* to *salvation?* Shall we secure

ourselves and be indifferent about pleasing the Saviour? We affectionately ask of our brethren who differ from us, if we dare follow any other course than that we pursue? Are we at liberty to trifle with the Master's words? Could we appear in His presence and calmly acknowledge that we considered this particular command too trifling to be attended to?

"Ye are my friends, if ye do *whatsoever* I command you."—John 15: 14.

PÆDO-BAPTIST TESTIMONY.

Very Rev. A. P. Stanley, D.D., Dean of Westminster.—"For the first 13 centuries the almost universal practice of baptism was that we read in the New Testament, and which the very meaning of the word "baptize"—that those who were baptized were plunged, submerged, immersed in the water. . . . Still in our own church as positively enjoined in theory as it is universally neglected in practice. (Book of Common Prayer, Public Baptism.) Baptism by sprinkling was rejected by the whole ancient Church (except in the rare case of death-beds or extreme necessity) as no baptism at all."

The Life and Epistles of St. Paul, by Rev. W. J. Conybeare, M.A., and Very Rev. J. S. Howson, D.D., Dean of Chester. Commenting on Romans vi, 3, 4, "This passage cannot be understood unless it be borne in mind that the primitive baptism was by immersion. . . . It must be a subject of regret that the general discontinuance of this original form of baptism has rendered obscure to popular apprehension some very important passages of Scripture."

The Apostolical Epistles, by Rev. J. H. Macknight, D.D., (Presbyterian).—"Christ submitted to be baptized; that is, to be buried under the water by John, and to be raised out of it again, as an emblem of His future death, and resurrection. In like manner, the baptism of believers is emblematical of their own death, burial and resurrection."

Notes on the New Testament, by Rev. John Wesley, M.A.—"Buried with Him, alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."

Rev. George Whitefield, B.A., Minister of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion.—In his *Sermons*, p. 297, "It is certain that in the words of our text (Rom. vi, 3, 4), there is an allusion to their manner of baptism, which was by immersion, which is what our own Church allows."

Commentary on Romans, by Rev. Thos. Chalmers, D.D.—"The original meaning of the word *baptism* is *immersion*; and though we regard it as a point of indifference whether the ordinance so named be performed in this way or by sprinkling, yet we doubt not that the prevalent style of administration in the Apostles' days was by an *actual submerging* of the whole body under water.